



Minutes of the Housing Rental Company Committee

4 December 2017

-: Present :-

Councillors Lewis (C), Pentney, Robson, Sykes and Tyerman

(Also in attendance: Councillor Bye)

9. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Darling (S) and O'Dwyer.

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Conservative Group, the membership of the Committee had been amended for this meeting by including Councillors Lewis (C) and Sykes instead of Councillors Barnby and Thomas (D).

As Vice-Chairman Councillor Robson chaired the meeting.

10. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Rental Company Committee held on 30 October 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. Urgent Items

The Committee considered the items in Minutes 17 and 18 and not included on the agenda, the Chairman being of the opinion that they were urgent by reason of special circumstances i.e. the matter having arisen since the agenda was prepared and it was unreasonable to delay a decision until the next meeting.

12. System change to a Housing First/Housing Led system for Homelessness

Members noted a report that advised of progress on moving to a Housing First model. The Strategic Commissioning Officer informed Members that there was a growing body of evidence to suggest that the model can be successful for repeat users of services. The model considers stable housing to be the key to people being able to address issues such as drug and alcohol use, legal issues and mental and physical health needs.

To this end, an application has been made by Shekinah, Westward Housing and Torbay Council to the Nationwide Foundation, to fund a piece of work to look at how to make the change. The outcome of the bid will be known shortly and if successful work will start in early 2018.

13. Emergency Accommodation (Family Provision)

Members considered an exempt report that sought investment from the Housing Company for the purpose of discharging the local authorities responsibilities in relation to temporary accommodation for families.

Resolved

That the Housing Rental Company Committee supports the principle as set out in the submitted exempt report and requests the Director of Adult Services and Housing in consultation with the Chairman to establish the business case and determine the most cost effective route for the acquisition and development of the accommodation.

(Note: Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 13 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

14. Emergency Accommodation (Vulnerable Needs Provision)

Members considered an exempt report that sought investment from the Housing Company for the purpose of discharging the local authorities responsibilities in relation to temporary accommodation for vulnerable single adults.

Resolved

That the Housing Rental Company Committee supports the principle as set out in the submitted exempt report and requests the Director of Adult Services and Housing in consultation with the Chairman to establish the business case and determine the most cost effective route for the acquisition and development of the accommodation.

(Note: Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 14 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

15. Housing Strategy Action Plan Update

Members considered a report that set out the updated action plan. Members were advised that the action plan will require further revision once the impact of the recent Government housing and welfare policy changes including those in the Chancellor's recent budget statement had been assessed.

Members requested officers update the action plan with the number of completed affordable housing properties in order for Members to track the level of properties that are coming to fruition.

Resolved;

That the Housing Strategy Action Plan be approved.

16. Government Housing Policy

Members considered a report that aimed to set out current Government housing policy in order to determine whether the delivery of the Council's Housing Strategy needs to be redirected to make best use of the resources that are available to address housing need in Torbay.

The Director of Adult Services and Housing informed Members that over the coming months work will be undertaken to assess the implications of the latest changes tranches of which will be presented at future meetings.

17. Long Lease on Residential Units

Members considered an exempt report that proposed the Housing Company acquires, by the way of a long lease, residential properties to help meet the objectives of the Housing Strategy.

Resolved:

- i) That, subject to Council confirming the purchase, the appropriate due diligence being undertaken to ensure that the proposal will be cost neutral once the Housing Company is established, enter into a long lease with Torbay Council for the residential units at the property set out in the exempt report;
- ii) that if necessary, to authorise up to £10,000 per unit of affordable housing grant to assist in making the proposal financially viable; and
- iii) that the Housing Rental Company Committee delegate authority to the Housing Directors in consultation with the Chairman of the Housing Rental Company Committee to agree and finalise the detailed terms of this acquisition.

(Note: Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 13 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

18. Land at 286-288 Totnes Road and Redwell Lane

The Housing Rental Company Committee was consulted on a decision that was to be taken by the Chief Executive of Torbay Council. The decision sought to provide up to £100,000 from the Council's Affordable Housing budget to the Housing Company to fund the necessary works to obtain detailed planning permissions on sites at Totnes Road and Redwell Lane.

Resolved:

Approved.

(Note: Prior to consideration of the item in Minute 13 the press and public were formally excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

Chairman/woman